



RECEIVED  
FSIS DOCKET 100  
99 JAN - 7 AM 10: 14

# NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FURTHER INFORMATION  
CALL (202) 337-9400  
WWW.GMABRANDS.COM

45

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Gene Grabowski or Brian Sansoni  
(202) 337-9400 or [www.gmabrands.com](http://www.gmabrands.com)

## U. S. FOOD SAFETY CAN BE ENHANCED WITHIN EXISTING REGULATORY FRAMEWORK, GMA TELLS PRESIDENTIAL PANEL

WASHINGTON, DC, Oct. 2 -**The** government and the food industry can **build** a stronger food safety system within the existing regulatory framework, the Grocery Manufacturers of America today told a special presidential panel studying possible changes US. food regulation.

In testimony presented to the first meeting of the President's Council on Food Safety, **GMA** emphasized the importance of using available resources more efficiently rather than "turning an imperfect but effective system on its head."

CMA, the world's largest association of food, beverage and consumer product companies, offered **its** comments as a partial assessment of a draft vision statement issued in August by the National Academy of Sciences. President Clinton created the special panel to consider the NAS recommendations.

"Arbitrarily reorganizing the government – tempting as that might be – will not make our food supply safer," said Dr. **Stacey** Zawel, CMA Vice President, Scientific and Regulatory Affairs. "Better focusing our limited public and private resources and using them more effectively to address real food safety hazards, on the other hand, can make a difference."

Dr. **Zawel** added that the food industry is seeking a stronger partnership among state and federal governments, food manufacturers and consumers to improve a food safety system that already provides "the safest, most abundant and most affordable food supply in the world."

Specifically, CMA recommends five ways to better focus food safety resources:

- Emphasize research, identifying and fighting true causes of foodborne illness with the right scientific weapons.
- Educate everyone who handles food – from producer to consumer – about his or her roles in helping to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Using tools like the national Fight BAC Program, classroom education, advertising and other methods, the government and the food industry must teach all Americans how to handle and prepare food safely.

**PAGE 2—U.S. Food Safety**

- **Allow FDA, USDA and other agencies to each do what it can do best, reducing conflict and duplication and enhancing effectiveness and efficiency.**
- **Place greater emphasis on the use of modern technology and new labor procedures, rather than merely hiring more food inspectors who are likely to miss foodborne pathogens.**
- **Provide strong and sensible leadership from Congress and the Administration that resists the temptation for quick fixes, and instead searches for real long-term solutions to food safety issues.**

**Zawel said CMA will work toward the development and implementation of a strategic plan designed to make the draft food safety system vision a reality.**

**###**

**CMA is the world's largest association of food, beverage and consumer product companies. With U.S. sales of more than \$430 billion, CMA members employ more than 2.5 million workers in all 50 states. The organization applies legal, scientific and political expertise from its member companies to vital food, nutrition and public policy issues affecting the industry.**